



**IASCE**

**IRISH ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL  
CARE EDUCATORS**

**WORKING GROUP REPORT**

**'THE PARTICULAR EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS  
OF  
THE WORK BASED LEARNER  
ON  
SOCIAL CARE PROGRAMMES'**

**May 2006**

## **Contents Page**

	<b>Page no</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1: Presentation of Findings from Questionnaire – Student Representatives</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section 2: Presentation of Findings from Questionnaire – Heads of Departments</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Section 3: Key Findings from Questionnaires</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Section 4: Managers Release Forms</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Section 5: Induction Programmes</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 6: Suggested Minimum Standards For Work Based Learners</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Section 7: Recommendations</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>26</b>

## Introduction

Early in 2005, the Executive of IASCE established a working group whose aim was to examine the particular educational support needs of the work-based student on social care programmes. The working group comprised of the following people:

Karen Finnerty, Open Training College (Chair)  
Karen Sugrue, Limerick Institute of Technology  
Kevin Lalor, Dublin Institute of Technology  
Danny Meenan, Institute of Technology, Sligo  
Tom Farrelly, Institute of Technology, Tralee  
Raymond Watson, Open Training College

Prior to the first meeting the working group decided to 'take a reading' from the ground as to what areas might be of interest or relevance. To this end, an email was circulated to circa 90 social care staff from the Colleges represented on the Executive. 3 responses were received which highlighted APEL and placement issues as being of interest. One response also suggested involving students in whatever work was undertaken.

The Working Group (WG) then convened its first meeting in April 2005. As the brief of the group was very broad, at this meeting the working group sought to:

- (1) Define more specifically the areas to investigate.
- (2) Determine how the information generated might best be used.

To address these two areas a number of actions were agreed that sought to identify/examine the particular educational support needs of the work based student and to facilitate exchange on information on a number of areas as they are addressed in the respective Colleges. The group also decided to use the term Work-Based (WB) Learner.

The actions to be undertaken by the WG included:

1. A **questionnaire**, seeking information on the particular educational support needs of the WB learner would be circulated to the Colleges currently working with WB learners. (In a follow up meeting, it was agreed to send a version of the questionnaire to the Head of Department and a version to Student Representatives.) The issues identified from the email responses (above) would be included as part of the questionnaire. 8 Colleges were identified for circulation.
2. Information on the **Induction Programme(s)** run in the various Colleges would be compiled and circulated for information purposes.
3. Information on the **Managers Release Forms/Agreement Forms** used by the Colleges would be compiled and circulated for information purposes.
4. A draft of possible **'Common Minimum Standards For Work Based Learners'** would be compiled. This would be a suggested list that the executive could choose to adopt or not.

5. A report on the work of the group would be compiled and presented to the Executive.

In relation to how the above information might best be used, the WG felt that the information might be used to develop a common set of standards and guidelines that might be adopted by the relevant Colleges. However, the group recognised that this would be a decision for the Executive to make when the working group had completed its work and presented its findings.

The group met three times during 2005 with communications in between meetings being undertaken by email.

This report outlines the work of the group and its findings. It is presented in sections, which correspond to the actions outlined above. Sections 1 & 2 present the findings from the questionnaires. These are the largest sections as they represented the bulk of the information sourced from the key stakeholders. The working group agreed to present the findings in their totality, as the samples used were small and it was felt there was real value to providing as comprehensive a picture as possible (including actual comments from respondents). This presentation of the data may be non-standard but it was felt that it was appropriate for this context and purpose.

The WG has not provided extended commentary or any evaluative judgement on the findings other than to extract some key findings.

Based on the information gathered, the WG is proposing a common set of minimum standards for WB learners to the Executive in addition to some other recommendations. The WG acknowledges that whether these recommendations are accepted or not is a matter for the Executive.

The WG wishes to acknowledge the contribution of all people who provided information to assist the work of the group. In particular, thank you to the student representatives and heads of departments who took the time to complete the questionnaires. The WG hopes that this report will contribute in some measure to the improvement of the educational experience in for WB learners in our Colleges.

## Section 1: Responses from Student Representatives

8 Questionnaires circulated

8 Replies received BUT

2 Colleges didn't respond. 2 Colleges submitted 2 responses each. Both included.

KEY: ✓ = indicated once

### Q1. What supports have you found useful in taking on your course of study?

Family	✓ ✓
Manager	✓
Colleagues	✓ ✓
Friends	✓ ✓
The Group/fellow students	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Mentor	✓
Email/discussion board	✓
Library services	✓ ✓
Tutors/lecturers	✓ ✓ ✓
Regular supervisor	✓
Head of dept/ coordinator	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Counsellor	✓
Tutorials	✓
Mature students society	✓
Financial support	✓

**Q2. Are there additional supports that were not provided which would have supported you?**

Mentors in place helpful on commencing	✓
Time off from work	✓
Extra study days	✓
Facilitation re transition	✓
Initial background reading before commencing course	✓
Timetable in advance or when starting not later	✓
Block release rather than single days timetabled	✓
Regular meetings between class reps and senior lecturers to sort out problems	✓

**Q3. Did you encounter any of the following challenges in commencing your studies?**

Challenges	Yes	No
Motivation	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Lack of confidence	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Fear of unknown	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Dyslexia	✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
IT related	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Time management	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓

**Comments**

***On motivation:***

"It had been a long time since I had taken on such a workload"

"Difficult to stay motivated until July – was a long year"

"I was highly motivated as I had a very positive experience of studying with xxx while completing a previous qualification"

"I was eager to work to the best of my capabilities and discover better ways to practice"

"In social care you must be motivated or your lack of motivation will be highlighted in your workplace"

***On lack of confidence:***

"With my experience of working in the field I felt I would be able to handle the course"

"Returning to education after a long break is very daunting"

"It had been a couple of years since I studied. I didn't know if I had the ability to complete assignments on modules that were less applied"

"Lack of confidence in giving presentations"

"At the beginning but it is much better now"

***On fear of the unknown:***

"Better now"

"Not knowing the standard"

"Not really. I find the unknown a challenge as you are learning new things"

"Not knowing all details of course requirements was for me a fear of one unknown"

"Colleagues who had taken the course before me had prepared me somewhat"

"Placement in second year was abroad"

***On dyslexia:***

"No dyslexia but aware of my poor spelling!"

***On IT related:***

"Did a computer course. Getting better every day"

"Poor computer skills"

"No. Tutors were very helpful"

"There is no IT training in 1st year social studies"

***On time management:***

"Juggling was initially difficult but with practical supports in place this improved"

"Balancing work, home and College commitments can be difficult"

"This is always a problem - a common problem that everyone has to sort out for themselves"

"Difficult trying to manage home, life, work and College"

"You learn time management in 2<sup>nd</sup> year"

**Q 4: Is it important for you to be integrated into all aspects of College Life?**

Yes	No
✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

### Comments

"Not really as I wouldn't have the time"

"Not all, I don't mind missing social aspects as my time away from home is stretched most of the time"

"No as a mature student the social and sporting elements of College life are not a priority for me"

"Initially no. I was with a small WBL group. Since joining the bigger group my interest has grown"

"Yes but time and family don't allow us to hang around" ..

"Sport is an excellent social aspect that helps a student escape from any day-to-day challenges within Colleges".

### **Q 5. What motivated you to return to learning at this stage in your life?**

Required for career advancement	✓ ✓
Wish to contribute to community	✓
Personal development	✓
Positive experience with the College previously	✓
Model of delivery was alternative and manageable	✓
Financial assistance made available	✓
To become qualified - compulsory	✓ ✓ ✓
Career change	✓
Challenge	✓

### **Q 6. Does the College support you to manage your time?**

Yes	No
✓ "Only initially"	✓
✓ "To some extent"	
✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	

**Q 7. Are there any other comments you would like to make in relation to the particular educational support needs of the WB learner?**

<b>No Response</b>	✓ ✓
<b>No</b>	✓ ✓
<b>* Yes</b>	✓ ✓ ✓

*\*Comments:*

"Computer access to web needed"

"The main problem facing the WBL is time management. I feel it is an issue which needs constant monitoring by the College to pre-empt the extra pressures and stress which may result from the juggling act that WBL need to perform to meet their commitments"

" Our third year will be on work experience. There is no point in people with young children being placed in positions such as residential care, where they cannot meet commitments to their work or their families. Residential is not an option for people with families"

## Section 2: Responses from Heads of Departments

8 Questionnaires circulated

6 Replies received

**Q1. From your experience, are there particular needs that arise in relation to WB Learners? Please outline.**

Timetable flexibility	✓
Induction/study skills module/block essential	✓ ✓ ✓
Literacy skills	✓
Time management	✓ ✓ ✓
Being compelled to take on course (causes difficulties)	✓
Sourcing community supports	✓
APEL	✓
Integrating into main of student body	✓
Staff developing skills to work with adults	✓
Extra library resources	✓
Understanding their learning style	✓
Confidence in formal 3 <sup>rd</sup> level system/negative previous experience in formal educational settings	✓ ✓
Negotiating adequate and appropriate workloads	✓
Finance	✓ ✓

IT supports/Need remote access	✓ ✓
Low esteem/ confidence/ They need more reassurance	✓ ✓
They are more demanding	✓

**Q 2. What supports have been put in place in your College for such learners?**

Induction/study skills programme/module	✓ ✓
Seminar (1 day) study skills/time management	✓
Booklet on returning to study	✓
1 <sup>st</sup> yrs screened for learning disorders e.g. dyslexia	✓
Specialised course structure over 3 semesters	✓
Own library	✓
Evening/weekend programme	✓
Appointment/allocation of staff sympathetic to adult learners	✓
Specific contact person - field based resource	✓
Sponsorship and release form	✓
Tutorial support	✓ ✓
Detailed feedback an course assessment	✓ ✓
IT support/training/email	✓
Supports to deal with low confidence/esteem issues	✓
Financial support and bursary system	✓

Partnership Approach (between student, agency, College)	✓
Class advisor has been put in place	✓
Thesis supervisors	✓
Some notes on Moodle (Web Platform)	✓

**Q 3. In relation to WBL what are your entry criteria for:**

**(A) Year 1:**

Working in social care domain	✓
Applicants over age 23 do not need to meet minimum entry criteria	✓
Employed full-time for 2 yrs or more in a social care environment	✓ ✓
Leaving Cert or equivalent	✓
Interview, 2 yrs social care work over 23 <b>or</b> leaving cert	✓
Over 23, working in services (min 20hrs per week)	✓
Not applicable: only offer Level 8 add-on to work based learners. Need Level 7 to access	✓

*Colleges indicated one or more of above criteria.*

**(B) Advanced Entry:**

As for Year 1 (Over 23, working in area)	✓
Judged an individual basis	✓
Substantial experience and relevant qualifications	✓
2 years experience/ current involvement in area plus interview	✓
Recognised academic qualification with disability focus at level 6 or above	✓

**(C) Exemptions:**

Given for placement module - any relevant accredited prior qualifications	✓
Judged on an individual basis	✓
In line with IT policy - evidence of fulfilling learning outcomes	✓
Individual subjects can be negotiated with the department on production of official transcripts	✓
On modular basis with recognised qualification (level 6 up) subject and learning outcomes match	✓

**Q 4. What delivery models are used for your WBL (please indicate if more than one)?**

Face-to-face class contact	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
E-Learning	✓ ✓ ✓
Supported open learning	✓ ✓
Distance Learning	✓ ✓
<b><i>Other:</i></b> On-site Portfolio building All 4 - a blended approach	✓ ✓ ✓

**Q 5. Where there is face-to-face contact are classes on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or other basis? (Please specify other if ticked).**

Weekly	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Fortnightly	-
Monthly	✓
Other	✓

**Q 6. Do you have a formal AP(E)L Policy?**

Yes	✓
No	✓ ✓ ✓
In development	✓ ✓

If yes, can you provide a brief outline of the process?

*Comments:*

"Administratively cumbersome. We give exemptions on basis of accredited relevant prior learning".

"Valex model in development".

**Q 7. Practice Placement (Where do students undertake their placement?)**

Own Place of Work	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ (for Yr 1 & 2)
Own Agency/Different Location	✓ *
Different Agency	✓ * ✓ (Yr 3)
Other	✓ (varies)
Not applicable – no placement on Level 8	✓

*Comment added*

\* "Where it can be facilitated. In practice this happens for very few students".

**Q 8. Are there particular needs that arise for WBL in relation to placements?**

Placements are exempt (?) but ideal if they could be arranged in another agency – not always possible	✓
Study Leave/ Reduction in working hours to complete portfolio	✓
Problem for people in F/T employment	✓
Agency recognition of requirements of students	✓
Supervisor in agency	✓
Placement report on progress in light of course participation	✓
Not applicable – no placement on Level 8	✓

**Q9. Are WBL facilitated by your College to be involved in structures such as Programme Boards and Quality mechanisms? Please outline.**

Are an essential part of Programme Boards and QA process	✓
Within department – opportunities for direct feedback	✓
Are included in College structures	✓
No but should be - payment of expenses to attend course boards Yes, they complete standardised course/module questionnaires	✓
Class reps invited to attend boards	✓
WBL has a course board but run from a different section-Not part of social care suite of courses	✓
Class reps invited to such meetings	✓

**Q 10. How many WB students do you currently have?**

<b>Total from responses</b>	
Year 1	178
Year 2	149
Year 3	89
Year 4	55

**Q11. Are there any final comments you wish to make in relation to the 'particular educational support needs of the work-based learner?'**

- "Needs are extensive but need to be addressed"
- "Some way to facilitate networks of such learners would be good"
- "Have to introduce more flexible delivery mechanisms and APEL to respond to variety of learning needs in the social care arena"
- "The WB learner should be treated as an adult learner in contrast to being another "mature student"
- "Their support needs are quite different to the school leaving student"
- "WB students unique characteristics should be supported and harnessed"
- "They bring practice into the College"

## **SECTION 3: KEY FINDINGS**

### **1. From Student Representatives**

- 'Fellow students/the group' was the support identified most frequently by respondents.
- The additional supports identified, which would have been supportive were of a practical/logistical nature e.g. timetabling issues, advance information, time off from work.
- 'Lack of confidence' and 'time management' were the most frequently identified challenges. However, most people felt that their College did support them with time management.
- Being integrated into the main of College life was not an issue for most respondents.
- 'To become qualified' (compulsory) was the most frequently cited reason for returning to study.

### **2. From Heads Of Departments**

- The list of particular needs of the WB learner identified by heads of departments was extensive and indicated little commonality across the Colleges. This is not to say commonality does not exist only that each head of department identified different issues.
- The list of supports provided was also extensive and also showed little commonality. As above, this is not to say commonality in supports does not exist only that each head of department identified different supports.
- Criteria for entry to Year 1, Advanced Entry and for Exemptions differed between Colleges sometimes substantially.
- Face-to-face is the most widely used delivery methodology although alternative approaches are also becoming evident. Where face-to-face classes are used these are most frequently timetabled on a weekly basis.
- Only one College indicated having a formal APEL policy in place. Two Colleges have an APEL policy/procedure in development.
- Most students undertake placements in their own place of work.
- The particular needs of the WB learner in relation to placements showed little commonality across the Colleges.
- All Colleges indicated some involvement of WB learners in quality mechanisms/programme boards but the level and type of involvement varied.
- There are currently 178 first years, 149 second years, 89 third years and 55 fourth years on WB programmes in the 8 Colleges surveyed.

## **SECTION 4: MANAGERS RELEASE FORMS**

The following is an analysis of the manager release forms received from the OTC, Carlow College, ITB, DIT, ITS (HSE West) and LIT (HSE SA). It identifies the totality of the components covered on the forms.

### **Line Management Supervision.**

This relates to the workplace identifying who will be the named supervisor/mentor for the student. Most Colleges look for this and generally look for a name and contact details.

### **Fees**

This relates to the fees charged by the Colleges for the student to complete the training. All Colleges look for the assurance that the employer will pay the fees. Some employers may ask for the student to repay all or part of the fees paid if they do not complete the course, fail the course or leave their particular place of employment within two years.

### **College Attendance**

All Colleges expect the students to be released from their rostered work to attend lectures and related College activities. Some clearly state that they would expect the employer to keep the student in employment for the duration of the course. From an employer perspective the student will be released to attend College at the time they are rostered to work but must also attend College in their own time when not rostered to work. There may also be occasions when the needs of the service and availability of staff cover may be an issue but it was anticipated that this would be kept to a minimum

### **External Placement Agreement**

This refers to a structured assessed placement away from the students' normal place of work so that the student gains the experience of working in a different social care setting for an agreed time. Most of the Colleges and employers agree that this is very important and integral to the student's increased learning and development but there are some difficulties from an employer's perspective in relation to costs, the availability of staff cover and the need to maintain continuity of service for the clients.

### **Exam Leave**

All students are expected to attend the exams set by their College. Colleges expect that the students will be released from their place of work to attend the exams. Some students are given study leave and exam leave and others will have to attend the exams in their own time.

### **Employer Commitment**

All line managers are expected to agree to the provisions outlined by the Colleges and sign the appropriate forms indicating this. Seniors managers sign off the agreements from an agency perspective.

**Other Issues**

Some Colleges ask for evidence of Garda Clearance and employment references. Clarification is also sought on issues such as student suitability and how the student completing the course will benefit the organisation. Employers expect the student to remain in the department or the organisation for an agreed period after the course has been completed.

**SAMPLE MANAGER/AGENCY RELEASE FORM (To be used/ modified as required by an individual College)**

<p><b>College Logo</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Manager Release Form</b></p> <p>Supporting Agency.....</p> <p>Name of Applicant.....D.O.B.....</p> <p>Place of employment.....</p> <p>Position..... Length of service.....</p> <p>Course title..... Awarding Body.....</p> <p>Course duration..... Year of entry.....</p> <p>College days per week during term time.....</p> <p>Funding per year:</p> <p>Registration Fee.....</p> <p>Course Fee.....</p> <p>I _____ (Name and position) agree to release _____ for _____ day(s) per week to attend the above mentioned course and any additional workshops during term time when s/he is rostered to work.</p>
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I agree to make the necessary arrangements to provide funding for her/his course fees and related aspects and continue to provide employment throughout the duration of the her/his time on the course in line with the agency's employment policies.

I agree that s/he will receive ongoing supervision, in line with the agency's policy, throughout the duration of her/his time on the course.

I agree that s/he will be released to attend examinations and will receive one day study leave for each examination up to a total of five study days per academic year.

In line with College policy, I agree that s/he will be released to undertake a placement(s) in an alternative setting for the requisite College time.

I agree to provide staff replacement cover during any College related absences from his/her place of work.

I confirm that s/he has demonstrated the ability to undertake a third level College course. (Supporting statement attached.)

I confirm that I have copies of her/his employment references, a current CV and Garda Clearance on file. Copies will be provided if requested.

**Line Manager's Signature:**

**Signed** ..... **Position**.....

**Date**.....

## **SECTION 5: INDUCTION PROGRAMMES OVERVIEW**

The following is an overview of the common features of the induction programmes for work-based learners being run in OTC; ITT; DIT, ITS (HSE West) and LIT (HSE SA). It identifies the totality of the components covered in induction programmes.

### **Introduction to Staff**

This includes the formal welcome to the new students and an introduction to each member of staff as well as an opportunity to discuss and explain the role that each member of staff plays (particular emphasis on the role of the tutor or supervisor where appropriate).

### **Review of the Student Handbook**

This provides the student with information on academic and management structures. It also outlines the rules and regulations of the College. Appeals procedures are explained, as is College management of corrected work, fees, bursaries and other money issues. What is expected of the student is also reviewed.

### **Overview of Course**

This is an opportunity to provide the student with an overview of the course as well as an explanation of the assignments and examinations procedures.

### **Student Support Services**

Student support staff are introduced to the students and the services and supports they offer outlined to the student.

### **Tour of College**

A tour of the College is offered to give the students their bearings in the College – library, canteen, administration offices and main lecture theatres are shown.

### **Library Tour**

A library tour is provided so that the student will be able to locate the necessary resources. The tour incorporates database and catalogue research skills as well as an overview of the online resources offered by the College library.

### **Study Skills**

Especially important for the adult learner who is often quite anxious about their return to education, a good grounding in study skills is offered to support them in their efforts. How to read, take notes and manage their time is covered as well as effective study methods.

### **Academic Writing Skills**

As this is often an entirely new skill, support in academic writing skills is offered. Referencing and bibliography construction is covered, as are skills on how to write an essay and the academic writing style necessary for completing course work.

### **Introduction to Computer Labs**

The adult learner may not have IT skills so a formal introduction to the computer labs and an overview of their usage (along with printing facilities and procedures) is very helpful.

### **IT Skills**

Basic IT and WebCT skills are also covered in some induction programmes.

### **Learning Contracts**

If learning contracts are used, they are discussed and explained during induction.

### **Duration**

Induction in Colleges varies from one day to five days.

## **SECTION 6: SUGGESTED MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WORK BASED LEARNING STUDENTS**

Arising from the work of the working group the following suggested minimum standards for the work-based learner are suggested. This list is an amalgam of the data generated from the work of the group and comments from the representatives of the Colleges who sat on the working group.

- Circulation of practical/logistical information to the student in advance of commencing (timetables, assigned tutors, dates for induction programmes etc)
- Active facilitation/ support with the transition required in returning to study
- Active on-going support with time-management
- Handbook giving details of staff, modules, library opening times, College regulations etc.
- Written guidelines on essay/ assignment/ project writing
- Provision of an 'Introduction to Computers' course
- Induction Course to include introduction to course, facilities, supports available, study skills, essay writing
- Registration and College ID card – issued promptly
- Ensuring 'managers release forms'/'agency agreement' are signed and in place prior to or shortly after the student commencing
- Organising placements which take cognisance of the WB learners other commitments – family, personal, work
- Designated work-based practice teacher
- Clear guidelines for the practice teacher
- Two tripartite meetings per year with placement supervisors
- College provided supervision training for the practice teacher
- Report/assessment form on work-based-learning to be provided to student at beginning of year
- Templates for identifying learning needs, setting learning contract with supervisor, supervision contracts to be provided
- On-going active liaison with agencies on all support matters relating to the learner
- Designated tutorial support throughout the academic year

- Prompt feedback (within 4 weeks) on written work, particularly on the first assignment
- Appropriate workloads
- Assistance with access to learning materials outside the library (via, for example, copyrighted learning packs, WebCT materials)
- Access to a study skills programme designed for the adult learner including note-taking, speed reading, writing skills, essay/project, preparation, time management, stress management
- Opening hours/access to College supports that take account of the WB learners needs

## **SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Based on the work undertaken the Working Group makes the following recommendations:**

1. Adoption of the Standards outlined in Section 6 as the 'Common Minimum Standards' that each College working with WB learners will strive to put in place.
2. Further exploration/ examination of the APEL area toward a standardising of the process and/or seeking clarity of how the process works in the various Colleges.
3. On-going and active involvement of WB learners in all College decision-making processes, quality monitoring, and developments that affect them.
4. The setting up of an inter-College network for WB learners and the staff who work with them to facilitate information exchange, learning and identification of common issues.
5. On going tracking and monitoring of WB learners within the Colleges by IASCE on a longitudinal basis to identify and plan for the specific needs of such learners.

**APPENDIX 1**

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

## **IASCE Working Group on the Special Needs of the Work Based Learner**

**Introduction:** Earlier in 2005 the Executive of the Irish Association of Social Care Educators set-up a working group with the aim of examining the 'special needs of the work based learner (WBL)'. In achieving this task, the Working Group has developed the following questionnaire for Student Representatives in Colleges offering Social Care programmes to work-based learners. A similar version has been developed for circulation to Heads of Departments. We would very much appreciate if you would complete the questionnaire and return to the Working Group c/o The Open Training College, Willowfield Park, Goatstown, D14 at your earliest convenience. Information provided will be treated with discretion and will be used to develop an overall picture of issues pertaining to the WBL within member Colleges of IASCE. Thank you in advance for your participation.

### **Applied Social Studies and/or Social Care Programmes – Level 7 & 8 Work Based Learners (WBL)**

#### **Questionnaire for Student Representatives in Member Colleges**

**Q1 - What supports have you found useful in taking on your course of study?**

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**Q2 - Are there additional supports that were not provided which would have supported you?**

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**Q3 - Did you encounter any of the following challenges in commencing your studies?**

Yes  No  Motivation issues: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_

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Yes  No  Lack of confidence: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No  Fear of the unknown: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No  Dyslexia: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No  IT related: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No  Time Management: *Comment* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any others not mentioned?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q4 - Is it important for you to be integrated into all aspects of College life?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q5 - What motivated you to return to learning at this stage in your life?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q6 - Does the College support you to manage your time?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q7 - Are there any other comments you would like to make in relation to the special needs of the WB learner?**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your time and participation.**

## **IASCE Working Group on the Special Needs of the Work Based Learner**

**Introduction:** Earlier in 2005 the Executive of the Irish Association of Social Care Educators set-up a working group with the aim of examining the 'special needs of the work based learner (WBL)'. In achieving this task, the Working Group has developed the following questionnaire for Heads of Departments in Colleges offering Social Care programmes to work-based learners. A similar version has been developed for circulation to class representatives of such learners. We would very much appreciate if you would complete the questionnaire and return to the Working Group c/o The Open Training College, Willowfield Park, Goatstown, D14 at your earliest convenience. Information provided will be treated with discretion and will be used to develop an overall picture of issues pertaining to the WBL within member Colleges of IASCE. Thank you in advance for your participation.

### **Applied Social Studies and/or Social Care Programmes – Level 7 & 8 Work Based Learners (WBL)**

#### **Questionnaire for Heads of Departments in Member Colleges**

**Q1 – From your experience are there particular needs that arise in relation to Work Based Learners (WBL)? Please outline.**

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**Q2 - What supports have been put in place in your College for such Learners?**

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**Q3 – In relation to WBL what are your entry criteria for?**

(a) Year 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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(b) Advanced Entry \_\_\_\_\_

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(c) Exemptions \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q4 - What delivery models are used for your WBL (please indicate if more than one):**

- Face-to-face class contact
- E-learning
- Supported Open Learning
- Distance Learning
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q5 - Where there is face-to-face contact are classes on a:**

- Weekly Basis
- Fortnightly Basis
- Monthly Basis
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q6 - Do you have a formal AP(E)L policy?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, can you provide a brief outline of the process?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Q7 - Practice Placement**

**Do students undertake their work placement in?**

- Their own place of work
- Own agency, but different location
- Different agency
- Another arrangement (please specify)

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**Q8 - Are there any particular needs which arise for WBL in relation to placements?**

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**Q9 - Are WBL facilitated by your College to be involved in structures such as Programme Boards and Quality mechanisms? Please outline.**

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**Q10 - How Many Work Based Students do you currently have?**

1<sup>st</sup> Year \_\_\_ or N/A \_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year \_\_\_ or N/A \_\_\_  
3<sup>rd</sup> Year \_\_\_ or N/A \_\_\_  
4<sup>th</sup> Year \_\_\_ or N/A \_\_\_

**Q11 - Are there any final comments you wish to make in relation to the 'special needs of the work based learner'?**

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**Thank You.**